



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 105th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 143

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1997

No. 90

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 21, 1997, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] for 5 minutes.

UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICES CHARGE UPHOLD BY FEDERAL COURT

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I want to show a headline in the Detroit Sunday Journal. It says, "Guilty, Judge Rules Paper Calls Strike. Ten Unfair Labor Practices Charge Upheld."

For almost 2 years now, over 2,000 families in Detroit have been on strike or have been locked out by the two largest newspaper chains in the country, the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press, represented by Gannett and Knight-Ridder, 2,500 families, not able to support their families, feed their families, live a normal life. This strike has torn apart our community.

But it is the community that came together over this period of time culminating in the verdict that was handed down by this Federal judge that said that these two large national corporations, Knight-Ridder and Gannett, violated, violated and were guilty of breaking the law and unfair labor practices.

What was the response to that? Well, the response, Mr. Speaker, was that last weekend Action Motown put together a teach-in at Wayne State Uni-

versity that was packed, overflowing crowds. The next morning we went out and we protested at the homes of the CEO's who lived in Grosse Pointe. We protested at the police station in Sterling Heights, MI, where those police officers engaged in brutality against the workers who were striking at the plant.

Then, Mr. Speaker, after these actions, over 100,000 people, we expected 50,000, but over 100,000 came out and marched in the streets of Detroit culminating in a rally in downtown Detroit where speakers from all over and workers from all over the country came. They came from Hawaii; farm workers came from California; steelworkers came from Pennsylvania; teachers came from New York, standing together in solidarity with their brothers and sisters who are trying to give their children the hope and the dignity of being afforded the opportunity to be represented in this society.

We are losing our economic democracy, if we indeed have ever had it in this country. Little by little, benefits for people are being chipped away. They are being taken away in terms of health benefits. Mr. Speaker, 3,500 kids a day in America lose their health insurance because these types of corporations, the transnationals, the multinationals, the big corporations, are dropping health insurance. They are losing their pension benefits. Wages for 80 percent of our people in this country have been frozen for about the last 20 years. The top 20 percent are doing well, but the rest are lagging behind.

So, Mr. Speaker, we said in this march and in this rally that we are coming together. It is happening all over the country. It is an untold story out there that people are organizing, whether it is in California with the strawberry workers or the poultry workers in North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, whether it is textile workers in the

South or manufacturing workers or steelworkers in West Virginia or Ohio, or those at Caterpillar in Decatur and in western Illinois, people are coming together to recognize what is happening in this economy. Those in the top are doing very, very well, but the other 80 percent of America is struggling.

So, I want to commend those who put on Action Motown, those who came together to organize on behalf of their brothers and sisters. They made a difference. They made a big difference. The Free Press' and the News' circulation has dropped by more than 50 percent since the strike began. Since the strike began, it has dropped more than 50 percent. They have lost over a half a billion dollars.

When people act in unison, they have power. What we have to do is empower the people, the workers. They have a voice and they should be heard and they were heard this past weekend.

So, I want to say to the Tom Bray's and the Joe Stroud's and the Jaske's and the Vega's and the Giles's and all the top executives at Knight-Ridder and Gannett: Obey the law, obey the law; you have been found guilty. Put those people back to work so they can take care of their families so we can bind the wounds in our community.

Mr. Speaker, this is not me speaking; these were community leaders that were there. There were religious leaders there. There were labor leaders there. There were people who want to bind the wounds in our community. Obey the law. They were proven guilty. They should obey the law and put these people back to work.

TRIBUTE TO IDAHO NATIONAL GUARDSMEN KILLED OR IN- JURED IN FLOOD RELIEF EF- FORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS). Under the Speaker's announced

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper containing 100% post consumer waste

H4223